AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

We claim:

1-32.   (Canceled).

33.   (Currently Amended) A method employed in discriminating an action performed by a human from automatic computerized action, the method comprising:

presenting a human ability challenge having a response component, the human ability challenge having distorted content that reduces the possibility of automated computerized identification of the content performed by an automated computerized operation and increases the possibility of a human response, wherein the response component is not based on a pre-selected content item chosen by a user, the presenting the human ability challenge including transmitting the human ability challenge from a server to a client, the presenting including:

generating the response component using original content including randomly generating the original content of the response component; and

distorting the original content of the response component to generate the distorted content;

encrypting the response component and transmitting the human ability challenge with the encrypted response component

electronically receiving a human response to the human ability challenge; and

decrypting the encrypted response component and comparing the decrypted received response to the original content of the response component to thereby help determine whether the received response was provided by a human.

34.   (Cancelled)

2

35.   (Cancelled)

36.   (Cancelled)

37.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 33, wherein the step of generating the human ability challenge comprises creating a distorted visual representation of the response component.

38.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 33, wherein the step of generating the human ability challenge comprises creating a distorted audio representation of the response component.

39.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 33, comprising selecting a type of human ability challenge from a plurality of human ability challenge types.

40.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 39, wherein the step of selecting the type of human ability challenge comprises randomly selecting the type of human ability challenge.

41.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 39, comprising determining the respondent's identity, and wherein the step of selecting the type of human ability challenge comprises selecting the type of human ability challenge based on the respondent's identity.

42.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 39, comprising generating the response component based upon the type of human ability challenge selected.

43.   (Canceled)

44.   (Canceled)

45.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 33, comprising providing a request for authentication for gaining access to a computerized resource, receiving an

authentication code, and verifying the code responsive to the request for authentication if

the received response to the human ability challenge matches the response component.

46.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 33, comprising receiving a

request for access to a computerized resource and providing access to the resource only if

the received response to the human ability challenge matches the response component.

47.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 33, comprising requesting

user confirmation of an action and accepting user confirmation only if the received

response to the human ability challenge matches the response component.

48.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 33, wherein the step of

presenting a human ability challenge comprises presenting one or more graphical images

representing the response component.

49.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 33, wherein the step of

presenting a human ability challenge comprises presenting a plurality of graphical images

representing identifiable objects and presenting a cognitive question regarding the plurality

of graphical images, wherein the response component represents an answer to the

question.

50.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 33, wherein the step of

presenting a human ability challenge comprises presenting an audio file reciting a question,

wherein the response component represents an answer to the question.

51.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 33, wherein the step of

presenting a human ability challenge comprises presenting a noisy textual image displaying

the response component.

52.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 33, wherein the step of

presenting a human ability challenge comprises presenting a natural language question,

wherein the response component represents an answer to the natural language question.

53.   (Cancelled)

54.   (Cancelled)

55.   (Cancelled)

56.   (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~53~~ 33, wherein the step of

receiving a response to the human ability challenge comprises transmitting the response

from the client to the server.

57.   (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~53~~ 33 comprising hashing the

response component and transmitting the human ability challenge with the hashed

response component.

58.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 57, wherein the step of

comparing comprises hashing the received response and comparing the hashed received

response to the hashed response component.

59.   (Currently Amended) A computer program product comprising a computer

useable medium having computer readable program code functions embedded in said

medium for causing a computer to discriminate an action performed by a human from

automatic computerized action, the computer program product comprising:

a first computer readable program code function that causes the computer

to present a human ability challenge having a response component, the human ability

challenge having distorted content that reduces the possibility of automated computerized

identification of the content performed by an automated computerized operation and

increases the possibility of a human response, wherein the response component is not

based on a pre-selected content item chosen by a user, the presenting the human ability

challenge including transmitting the human ability challenge from a server to a client, the

computer further operative, in presenting the human ability challenge, to:

generate the response component using original content including

randomly generating the original content of the response component; and

distort the original content of the response component to generate

the distorted content;

a second computer readable program code function that causes the

computer to encrypt the response component and transmitting the human ability

challenge with the encrypted response component and electronically receive a human

response to the human ability challenge; and

a third computer readable program code function that causes the computer

to decrypting the encrypted response component and compare the decrypted received

response to the original content of the response component to thereby help determine

whether the received response was provided by a human.

60.   (Cancelled)

61.   (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 60,

wherein the server comprises a proxy server positioned between an application server and

the client.

62.   (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 60,

wherein the server comprises an application server.

63.   (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 59,

wherein the first, second and third sets of computer program instructions reside on a

single computer.

64.   (Currently Amended) In an on-line system, a method for

reducing automated access, the method comprising:

allowing on-line access to data;

presenting a human ability challenge using an output device in response to

a request for access to data, the human ability challenge having distorted content that

reduces the possibility of automated computerized identification of the content performed

by an automated computerized operation and increases the possibility of a human

response, wherein the response component is not based on a pre-selected content item

chosen by a user, the presenting the human ability challenge including transmitting the

human ability challenge from a server to a client, the presenting including:

generating the response component using original content

including randomly generating the original content of the response component; and

distorting the original content of the response component to generate

the distorted content;

encrypting the response component and transmitting the human ability

challenge with the encrypted response component

electronically receiving a human response to the human ability

challenge; and

decrypting the encrypted response component and verifying that

the decrypted response satisfies the human ability challenge before allowing access to

data by comparing the received response to the original content of the response

component.